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ABSTRACT

Theoretical issues of concern to teachers in early childhood education are discussed in this collection of four papers titled: "Some Generic Principles of Teaching", "Psychological Development and Education in Early Childhood", "Teachers as Consumers of Educational Information", and "Notes on the Distinction between Education and Excitement". The first paper enumerates four principles of teaching: (1) the principle of congruity, (2) the principle of knowing the learner's understanding of what is to be learned, (3) the principle of timing, and (4) the principle of sociointellectual ambience. The second paper outlines those factors which affect preschool expansion, defines 'preschool program', and describes the parameters of the preschool program. Possible errors which emerged as a result of the emphasis on 'enrichment' are discussed, and it is suggested that a major goal for preschool education is to help children make sense of their own everyday experiences. The third paper discusses selling and informing models of information dissemination and contrasts the style, format and treatment of the same information in two publications. The final paper suggests that teachers develop activities that children will find satisfying over a long period of time rather than momentarily exciting. (GO)

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SECOND COLLECTION OF PAPERS FOR TEACHERS

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SOME GENERIC PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING

Lilian G. Katz, Ph.D.

Paper based on a presentation to the Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Early Childhood Educators, May 1975, Canberra, A.C.T.

My hope in this paper is to share some ideas about the fundamentals of teaching as they apply to the education of teachers for early childhood programs. I'd like to characterize these ideas in terms of "principles." You may be more comfortable calling them "organizing ideas" or "probability statements," "bold (or timid) assertions," "fundamentals" or "presuppositions." In any case, I have acquired the habit of calling them "principles": i.e. propositions which, although not always true seem sufficiently general to be useful for organizing information, making plans, evaluating and experimenting with diverse aspects of teaching. Although the principles are ennumerated as a sequence of four, I see them as interrelated in meaning, and intersecting in their referents.

I. The Principle of Congruity

The first principle, to which the other four are related, is that the way we teach teachers should be congruent in many basic aspects - but not all - with the way we want them to teach children. At first glance this principle seems to be a restatement of the truism, "Practice what you preach!" But the principle of congruity is offered not just in order to safeguard ourselves against being found hypocritical. The principle's usefulness seems to derive from two presuppositions. The first one - especially relevant to those of us who teach teachers - is

that we probably constitute a model for many of our learners and the principle of congruity may serve to remind us to maximize the opportunities to teach by example. The second and more critical presupposition is that there are some elements of teaching which are applicable to all teaching, whether of children in preschools or adults in teacher education. These elements are ennumerated below as "lesser principles," and together with the "first" principle of congruity they may be thought to constitute a set of generic principles of teaching.

A note of caution concerning our "first" principle may be in order here. The use of the term "congruity" is intended to suggest a kind of consistency, harmony, or concordance between the way we teach teachers and the way we want them to teach. In no way is it intended to imply isomorphism or identicality between teaching teachers and teaching children. It does not imply, for example, that adults should perform the same tasks (e.g. finger painting, block building, etc.) as they may provide for children. It is difficult to know just how adults would learn to teach by engaging in the same activities as young children. Such a training exercise would treat adults as though they were young children. The principles suggested here are addressed only to those elements of the role of learner, and hence teacher, which may reasonably be thought to apply to all teacher-learner encounters regardless of age or experience.

II. The Principle of Knowing the Learner's Understanding of What is to be Learned

Let us take it as a useful (though not always true) principle that

we cannot teach anything important to someone we do not know. Obviously this is not always true. We have all been taught by people who did not know us, e.g. by a lecturer addressing a large group in which we were just one of the crowd, or by writers whom we have never met. It is likely however that successful teaching of large groups is related to how well the lecturer or writer "knows" the audience. In this preliminary statement of the second principle I have intentionally used the qualifier "important." The term "important" refers to our constructions of those aspects of reality that are relatively central to our lives and our work. This includes such constructions as our explanations of the behavior of others, our identification of cause-and-effect relationships in events which matter to us, our conceptions of those things about which we have relatively intense feelings, concerns, anxieties and hopes.

This second generic principle of teaching is meaningful if we accept the assumption that a major function of a teacher--at every age of grade level--is to help the learner to improve, refine, develop or in some way modify his/her understanding* of the concept, task, idea or skill to be learned. And, in order to fulfill this function, the teacher must uncover what the learner's understanding of the task or concept to be learned actually is. It is in this sense that the teacher must know the learner.

Most of us who are teachers fret over how much material we have to cover. Certainly, adequate coverage of many content areas presents persistent problems. But adequate uncovering of the learner's under-

*The term "understanding" is used interchageably with the phrase "construction of reality."

standing or construction of the relevant reality may help us make better informed decisions about what material it is most appropriate to cover at a given time (see Duckworth, 1972).

Along these lines, it seems reasonable to assume that every learner does in fact have an understanding of the task, problem or concept to be learned. But the understanding may be insufficient, incorrect or inappropriate in some way.

Differentiation of Understanding

Of all the ways in which understandings may vary, let us examine one variable in particular, namely, the extent to which the learner's understanding of the situation, task or concept is differentiated or complex. Let us take for a simple example my relatively undifferentiated understanding of the game of tennis. I know that at least two people play with rackets and balls on a court with lines, and that they hit the ball across the net to each other. By contrast, my sons's understanding of tennis is highly and finely differentiated. His understanding includes concepts of games and sets, singles and doubles, rallies and vollies, loves and deuces, types of shots, as well as some intricate minutiae of appropriate dress. Another example of variations in differentiation or complexity of understanding can be seen when we consider that a 5-year old has an understanding of where she (or he) comes from; i.e., reproduction. But when she is 10-years old, her understanding will be even further finely differentiated. That understanding will include facts, concepts and theory at a range of levels of abstraction and concreteness, with subsumed interdependent facts, concepts, and theory,

as well as a variety of images, memories, ideas and associated feelings. One can say, then, that as a 5-year-old, she had an understanding of the phenomenon, but it was not as finely differentiated as it could ultimately become.

I am presupposing that, in the general case, a teacher is one who has a relatively finely differentiated or complex understanding of what is to be learned, and accepts the responsibility for helping the learner to increase the extent to which his/her understanding matches or at least includes the teacher's. If our understandings of most relevant events/phenomena are not more fully differentiated, more useful, more appropriate, more accurate and plausible than those of our learners, then we lack the professional authority to be their teachers. This is not to say that our learners are to be discouraged from developing understandings which are either better or different from the teacher's.

We might now amend our second principle as the principle of knowing the learner's understandings of what is to be learned. I am proposing that this is a generic problem for all teachers of all learners. If I want to teach a student, for example, techniques of conversing with children, one essential approach of several I might employ would be to uncover that student's construction or understanding of the teacher-child-conversation situation. It does not necessarily follow that, when I uncover that student's construction, I can teach him/her a more useful construction. My success here will be a function of the repertoire of teaching skills I bring to the situation. I should add that it may not be necessary

to probe each individual student's construction of the situation or task. From the knowledge and insight gained from experience I may be able to make good guesses or inferences about students' constructions. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that the probability of successful teaching (of important learnings) increases with increased knowledge of the learner, in particular, of the individual learner's construction of the relevant reality.

The Informality Hypothesis

A related hypothesis is that the greater the informality in the learning situation, the greater the access the teacher has to relevant knowledge of the learner; and that the greater the teacher's knowledge of the learners' understandings, the greater the probability that the teacher will respond appropriately (if appropriate responses are in his/her repertoire).

Informality in classrooms has been a popular conference topic in early childhood education during the last few years. Its popularity, however, seems to be related more to ideological positions than to the pedagogical principle of knowing the learner. I should add here a third hypothesis; namely, that there probably is an optimum amount of informality for each classroom unit (of adults or children) and perhaps for each individual. The optimum informality hypothesis is derived from two concerns. First, that there may be a degree of informality beyond which the students perceive the classroom proceedings and their own progress to

be stalled. Such excessive informality may be what students complain of as amiable "exchanges of ignorance." A second concern is just a hunch that (especially with respect to adults) teachers may become too close to their students and thus risk losing their capacities for the reasoned judgement required for evaluation of students' progress.

Another implication of our second principle is that it may be helpful to teach our students (children or adults) tactics and strategies by which to inform us where they are, how they are constructing the problem to be solved, what confuses them and how they understand whatever is to be learned. For example, we can teach children to say to us, "I'm lost," "Hold it," "Go over that again," "I don't understand," "I'm confused," etc. On one occasion I recommemded to a first grade teacher that she teach her pupils to signal her in this way. She responded positively, expressed agreement with the soundness of the procedure and then, after a pause, said quite spontaneously, "But they'll interrupt the lesson." Then she chuckled as she realized the meaning of her protestation. This teacher's comment informed me that covering or completing the lesson had a high priority in her understanding of teaching. Perhaps we could say of this incident that two different understandings of teaching came into contact, hers and mine.

The second principle also implies that we must be careful about teaching our learners to agree with us excessively, or to give us too quickly what we appear to want. We do this sometimes when we confuse conversations with what are really interrogations. Take, for example, a preschool

advisor who said to the teacher, "Why are those books on a table in the middle of the room instead of in that corner?" I would call this an interrogation because it was a question in which the right answer or the appropriate action was given away. Ultimately the advisor wants the advisee to take the appropriate action, of course. But she could probably achieve this by giving an order. If the advisor wants the advisee to solve problems on her own, beyond the immediate situation, however, one should address the modification of the advisee's understanding.

I saw another example of interrogation when a preschool expert asked a group of college students, "What are the three "d's" of education?" The respondents were quickly informed that one purpose of the question was to uncover what was in the questioner's mind. Surely there is a place for interrogation. Perhaps we want to know whether a young child knows his address and phone number. In such a case we can put it to the child honestly that we want to find out whether he knows it, and then interrogate.

While interrogation is useful for some types of assessment and examinations, it may undermine some important aspects of teaching For example, let us look at the possible consequences of the preschool advisor's interrogation about the books on the table. First of all, the chances are that her question or interrogation reduced the likelihood of subsequent open communication. It is unlikely that in a subsequent encounter the advisee would share with the advisor her confusions and doubts about organizing the room. Indeed, such a question--depending perhaps on the tone of voice and facial expression--is likely to set in

motion an adversary relationahip between advisor and advisee, since the interrogation implies the passing of judgement or a putting down of the advisee. I do not intend to take issue with the adequacy of the advisor's advice. My major point here is that the advisor's task is to help the advisee to understand or construct the situation more closely to her own understanding or construction. The probability that the advisor could help the advisee improve or refine her advisee's understanding of room arrangements, for instance, would increase if the advisor first uncovered how the advisee understood the situation. Then, with the knowledge thus obtained, the advisor could share some insights, concepts or facts which best "match," in J.McV. Hunt's sense of the term (Hunt, 1961 Chapter 7), the advisor's own understanding. In other words, interrogations inform learners that we know the right or best answers, solutions and ideas. We hope that this is so! But it is through conversations in which we probe others' thoughts and ideas, in which we solicit their views, opinions and wishes that we become informed of another's understandings of the relevant phenomena. The latter is the crucial step in teaching (and advising).

III. The Principle of Timing

The implications and hypotheses drawn from our second principle lead to a third one which seems to fit into the broad general category of timing. Two aspects of timing are taken up here. One is the rate at which teachers respond to learners in teaching-learning encounters.

This aspect might be called "pacing." Another aspect is the rate at which teachers' competence develops.

Pacing

I have in mind those frequent encounters in which, for example, a learner reveals an incorrect, inappropriate or over-simplified understanding or construction of a given concept or situation. The teacher recognizes the incorrectness of the concept and may offer a correction. The question of concern here is whether there is a right or better moment in time to offer this correction. When teaching student teachers we often have such timing decisions to make: we want to balance the rate at which we offer suggestions (which imply things could be going better) with the rate at which we offer encouragement and support (which implies that things are going well-- perhaps beyond our fondest hopes and expectations). It is not time, in and of itself, that is at issue. The issue is that learning, change and the development of understandings unfold and occur in time. Certainly all of us make errors in teaching by responding too fast or too slowly. However, it seems a reasonable hypothesis that greater latency, which allows more of the learner's behavior to unfold, increases the quantity of information upon which the teacher can formulate an appropriate response. Perhaps this hypothesis is merely an elaboration of the old fashioned virtue known as "patience." According to my present understanding of teaching, the virtue of patience resides in the relationship between latency and knowledge of the learner. Hypothetically there

are likely to be optimal latencies for every teaching-learning encounter.

Developmental Stages

A second aspect of our third principle is that no one enters a social position as a veteran, and that it is useful to think of teachers as having developmental stages with associated concerns and developmental tasks (see Fuller & Bown, 1974; Katz, 1972). In addition to concerns and tasks, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that understandings of teaching develop as experience accrues. I would predict and hope that teachers' understandings of what teaching is all about would be less finely and fully differentiated earlier in their careers than they become later on. The differentiation could be expected to increase in such things as the number of levels of analysis and conceptions of the teaching situation (i.e., greater depth of understanding, the range of explanations of children's behavior, conceptions of institutional processes and functioning, and so forth). Presumably the teacher of teachers has a finely differentiated understanding of what it is all about. By proposing the principle of timing I intend to encourage the teacher-educator to take a developmental view of her/his learners (as the learners should of children). The point is to focus on the kind of insight-sharing and information-giving which contributes to the steady but long process of refining understandings. Thus, in our discussions of teacher education as well as early childhood education, I suggest that we understand our responsibility more often to be one of helping the learner to develop rather than just to change. Change is easy and can be achieved quickly. Perhaps an extreme example helps to illuminate the

difference: just point a gun at a teacher and you can make his behavior change! But leave the room and after 30 minutes, what endures? The focus on development implies attention to questions of timing over the longer course of modifying, refining and differentiating understandings of phenomena which are important, central, salient or personally significant to the learner.

IV. The Principle of Sociointellectual Ambience

Let us assume that every educational program has a characteristic ambience or atmosphere which is perceived by most of the teachers and learners participating in it (see Katz, 1974). "Ambience," like "social climate," may be defined as "the feeling tone which expresses something about the feelings generated by the total set of relations between staff and recruits" (Wheeler, 1966). I want to suggest that the sociointellectual ambience of our teacher education settings should be congruent with the ambience we want our students to create in early childhood education programs. One of the most important challenges I see facing early childhood educators today is to strengthen the intellectual vitality of the sociointellectual ambience of both teacher education and early childhood education settings. In teacher education settings intellectual vitality may be achieved when staff members exhibit their concern, curiosity and involvement in the disciplines relevant to education, and may be supported and strengthened when staff members engage their students in activities in or through which they try to advance the conceptual and knowledge base of the field of early childhood education.

From my observations of early childhood programs in several countries, I have the impression that we are not providing activities and experiences of the kind into which children can sink their intellectual teeth. In some programs, children seem to be dabbling in a wide variety of activities which seem pleasant enough. In other programs, children are engaged in many routine academic tasks which also lack intellectual vitality. I see a major goal of early childhood education to be to help children make sense of their experiences and environments. In other words, we are responsible for helping young children to develop, refine, improve or deepen their understandings of the salient aspects of their day-to-day lives. The intellectual vitality of our programs can be strangthened when we encourage and help children to reconstruct these aspects. This can be achieved by actually building, making and reproducing some aspects, by dramatizing others, and by encouraging the observing, recounting, recalling, recording or discussing of their perceptions and understandings of their experiences.

I have a hunch that for this goal to be more fully realized, children in early childhood education programs will have to have stronger attachments to the teaching adults and that, in general, the relationships between adults and children must be characterized by greater intensity than they typically are now. Strength of attachment has to do with adults' usefulness as models as well as sources of demands, support, and encouragement. Intensity has to do with the role of concentration in teaching and learning. In my own teaching experience I find that the process of uncovering students' understandings of relevant phenomena

requires my full concentration on the unfolding events in the teaching situations.

Since we cannot cover everything we want our learners to know, we must try to teach in such a way as to increase the likelihood that our learners will go on learning. In other words, our teaching should strengthen the learner's disposition to be a learner. Those of us who teach teachers are responsible for helping our students to become life-long students of their own teaching. Some students learn what we have to teach them by tne explanations we give; some learn from the examples and illustrations we share; some learn from the model we provide; and some learn from all three of these aspects of our teaching. If we practice the first principle and teach in ways which are congruent with the ways we hope our students will approach young children, we may measure up to some of our most urgent challenges.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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Based on the keynote address and open lecture, National Conference on Preschool Education for Geographically Isolated Children. Australian Preschool Commission, Brisbane, Queensland. September 2-6, 1974.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD*

by

Lilian G. Katz, Ph.D.

A dramatic expansion in preschool education occurred in the United States during the last decade. Indeed, until recently, preschool education was a very small, almost invisible, field. However, in the early 1960's, preschool education became a topic in presidential speeches as well as in the campaign platforms of other politicians. At present the topic is being kept in the public eye primarily by the increasing number of mothers who are working and seeking adequate care for their young children.

In the 1960's several forces and pressures converged to spur on the preschool expansion. Certainly one major factor was the long overdue acknowledgement of the extensive impact of poverty on a large number of families in the United States. Another force at work was the developing, strident civil rights movement.

Another major factor spurring preschool expansion was the impact of J. McV. Hunt's work on our thinking about child development. Until the 1960's it was generally believed that the experiences in the early years - the first five or so - had an enduring and perhaps irreversible effect on <u>personality</u> development. Perhaps this is an exaggerated view of the impact of early experience on mature personalities.

*Based on the keynote address and open lecture, National Conference on Preschool Education for Geographically Isolated Children. Australian Preschool Commission, Brisbane, Queensland. September 2-6, 1974.

But with Hunt's seminal work early in the 1960's, we came to believe that the early experiences - the first five years, give or take a year - probably have an enduring and perhaps irreversible effect on intellectual development. How much we have overstated this case is yet to be determined. But in the early sixties, with Hunt's insight and our discovery of 'the other America,' we were off and running into program expansion and development, curriculum development, research and evaluation projects, laboratories and experiments, and unchecked optimism.

In this paper I want to share my ideas about where we seem to be today. What might we have thought or done differently, or possibly not have done at all? Perhaps the broad question is: What is it that we might recommend to others based on our experiences of the last ten years?

I shall begin by proposing a definition of preschool education and then try to identify some basic variables which might be considered in planning and implementing preschool programs.

For the sake of discussion I shall define a "preschool program" as a group setting for children from about three months old up to the compulsory age of entry into conventional or state supported schooling. This group setting is deliberately intended to advance, stimulate, or otherwise enhance children's physical, intellectual and social development.

The term "deliberately intended" is included in the definition because there are many activities and experiences to which young children are exposed which are not deliberately or consciously intended to affect their development. For example, the friendly, warm interaction among families and friends

in everyday life can be assumed to affect a child's development and presumably these spontaneous events can have positive effects on development. But it seems reasonable to suppose that the majority of such everyday events are not deliberately or intentionally planned as ways to help children develop. However, a preschool program, such as a Head Start center, kindergarten, or nursery class, provides sets of activities or experiences which are deliberately or consciously intended to have desirable effects on the children's development. It may be the degree of intentionality in thought and behavior which distinguishes mothering from teaching. Indeed, it may be that mothers should be protected from becoming self-conscious beyond an optimum amount or they may get "analysis paralysis." Mothering is probably most effective and satisfying when it is largely unself-conscious and spontaneous, and perhaps mothers should be protected from efforts to make them excessively analytical. Teachers, however, should be supported in their efforts to plan, to understand their own intentions and to implement those intentions effectively. Often, for those of us who are teachers, there is a gap between the intentions of our actions and the consequences of our actions. Indeed, it is partly in order to better understand and reduce that gap that we use tests, and other methods of assessment and evaluation.

Parameters of Preschool Programs

Once we have agreed, at least tentatively, on what we mean by the term preschool program, the next question is, what are the parameters of preschool programs? The term 'parameter' here means a broad class of variables which applies to all cases of preschool programs and which remains relatively constant during a given school year. So that we are asking: what are the variables all preschool programs have to be concerned with? Or what groups of variables are universal and apply to all preschool programs?

A. Characteristics of clients. Obviously all early childhood or preschool programs have clients, i.e. children. This parameter includes children and their parents. Children vary in age (from three months old to five or six years old in many nursery schools and day care centers). They vary in sex, socioeconomic background, mental and physical health, the language they speak, size of family, and aptitude and dispositions. Their parents also vary in many ways, for example, in their goals, aspirations, and methods of discipline or encouragement. These are just a few of the many possible variables in the parameter labeled characteristics of clients.

B. Characteristics of teachers and other assisting adults. In this parameter we consider all the ways in which preschool staff members might vary (in age, sex, experience, beliefs, skill, intelligence, warmth, etc.).

C. Program organization. This includes such variables as the variety and quantity of stimulation or activities provided for children, the temporal organization of activities, the content of lessons taught, and the

equipment and materials made available to children. Also included in this parameter is the locus of control of activity (i.e., teacher or child or both), and the method of grouping children (e.g. by age or by ability).

D. Philosophical orientation and historical factors. This includes such variables as the 'school of thought' subscribed to by the persons in charge of the program, subsuming a range of values, goals and objectives. The philosophical orientation may be explicit or implicit, or may vary on these two levels. Examples of preschool programs with diverse philosophical orientations are Montessori schools, Bank Street curriculum model, and the Behavior Analysis model.

Historical factors may include remote or immediate antecedents of contemporary program operation. An example of a remote historical factor is the "legacy" or mandate of a founder of a program or of the traditional clientele of a school. Recent history may involve recent battles over funding or within-staff disputes or staff changes. They are events which, although past, may still impinge on day to day operations of programs.

E. Parent power refers to variables having to do with the extent to which parents are involved in making decisions or otherwise influencing program implementation. Parents may be involved in decision-making which is central (e.g. staff selection-rejection), or peripheral (e.g. whether to bring cakes to classes for birthday parties). It includes also the extent to which parents pay for the services. In parent co-operative nursery schools, parents make virtually all decisions central to the program, including staff selection and program content. In

publicly-supported programs, parents usually have little power over such central aspects of their children's preschools.

F. Administrative factors and sponsorship. This parameter includes such variables as the size of a program, the distribution of authority, the division of labor, (maintenance, caretaking, personnel, etc.), staff morale, staff cooperation versus staff friction, and staff leadership. Also included here is the variety of public and private sponsoring agencies such as local educational authorities, community centers, churches, university laboratory schools, federal agencies, private franchise entrepreneurs, parent cooperatives and child guidance clinics. Each type of sponsorship may represent different emphases, hindrances and/or support.

G. Length of program includes such variables as the length of the school day and the number of sessions children attend. Examples are all-day, daily care; two or three hours per day, morning or afternoon sessions, two, three or more days per week; or the eight-week summer Head Start programs. Under this heading I would also include consideration of variables concerning how long a child attended the same preschool program, i.e. for one year, two or more.

H. Physical plant and regional climate, includes variations in the amount of space, the type of space, outdoor/indoor facilities and their accessibility, neighborhood location, the number of classrooms per site and the climate of the region. The flow of children's activities indoors and outdoors is greatly influenced by both the physical plant and the regional climate.

PARAMETER	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
A. Characteristics of Clients	A	AxB						
B. Characteristics of Teachers & Assistants	BxA	B	BxC					
C. Program Organisation		CxB	C					
D. Philosophical Orientation & History		DxB		D		DxF		
E. Parent Power		ExB			E			
F. Administrative Factors & Sponsorship		FxB				F		
G. Length of Program		GxB					G	
H. Physical Plant and Climate		HxB						H

Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Parameters Of Early Childhood Education shown as a Matrix.

In Figure 1, these parameters have been put into a matrix which may help to show how complex preschool education really is.

The cells in the diagonal represent all the knowledge or questions which might be asked concerning within-parameter variables. For example, in cell A, we would summarize all that is known, i.e. the state of-the-art of child development. Similarly, the cell marked B, represents all that is known about teachers and other assisting adults. It would consist of a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of those studies in which that cell's variables constitute both the independent and dependent variables.

This matrix is designed to show that what we 'know' about children and their development constitutes but one factor in program implementation,

hence program quality. Let us look at column B, for example, and examine some potential factors impinging on the quality of programs for young children. In the cell marked AxB, consider the effects, direct as well as interactive, of selected A variables on selected B variables. It is traditional to ask what effects teachers have on children (BxA), but we can reverse the question. What effects do characteristics of children have on teachers? For example, does the child's age affect teachers? I once observed a teacher in a day care centre (day nursery) with a group of eleven, 2-year-olds. For some reason I was not aware of, she was taking her group upstairs to another room. If you have a picture of what this scene might have been like, just modify it so as to see what it might have been like if her group of eleven had been mixed in age, and had included some 2-year-olds, some 3's and 4's, and perhaps a 5-year-old. Suppose her group were all 4-year-old boys. Would that group differ from a group which is all girls? Age and sex of children are gross variables. But there are many other characteristics of clients which impinge on teachers, hence on program quality.

Now we can turn briefly to the cell marked CxB and ask what might be some effects of program organization on teachers? Let us suppose that a program (or curriculum) is organized in such a way that children are obliged to attend a group story-reading activity, and that no alternative behavior is permitted. How does such a programmatic constraint affect teachers? Which teachers are affected or troubled by such a program variable? What are some of the potential effects of such program-teacher problems on program quality? Implementation of programs developed by specialists in laboratory settings is fraught with such problems of

teachers' responses to program organization variables.

In the cell marked DxB, questions concerning the effects of philosophy (values, goals and objectives, etc.) on teachers are raised. Consider briefly that early childhood educators are usually quite concerned with philosophy. But commitment to the "right" philosophy is not sufficient to make a program go. Most "philosophies" imply special skills and techniques. It may be that some teachers develop "philosophies" to justify or rationalize the techniques and skills that make them feel most effective.

In cell ExB, parent power and its effects on program quality is examined. As far as I know, parent power variables have not been studied. It would be interesting to know to what extent teachers become intimidated by parents who pay high fees, which, in the case of private or independent schools, keeps the program solvent. Is the reverse also true? When parents receive preschool program services (such as all-day care) free of charge, do they feel intimidated by the staff? How do these two levels of parent power affect program quality? In some types of preschool programs (e.g. parent cooperative, some Head Start centers) parents hire and fire the staff. How does this level of parent power affect teachers and consequently, program quality?

In the cell marked FxB, questions are raised concerning the influence of administrative factors on teachers and ultimately on program quality. To what extent does staff friction affect program quality? Questions concerning decisions about equipment and supplies, special activities (like field trips), and teacher autonomy in these and other matters are yet to be investigated. The way teachers treat

children often reflects the way teachers in turn are treated by their administrators. Invariably, in a preschool program where the relationships between teachers and children seem to have ideal qualities, it appears that the relationships among the staff are marked by the same qualities (respect, support, encouragement) as well as high expectations.

The potential effects of the length of the day (parameter G) on teachers are thrown into sharp relief when the question is asked, "Is teaching all day long twice whatever teaching half-day is?" It would seem relatively easy to prepare and implement a two-and-a-half hour morning or afternoon program which is well paced and full of interesting activities offered to children by an alert teacher. But working the whole day with young children presents quite different kinds of demands and threats to vitality. Whole day programs are emotionally draining as well as physically tiring. When a teacher works all day, every day, with very young children, the children may soon lose their charm and fail to be intellectually stimulating to the adults who care for them.

Finally, let us look at a few examples for the cell marked HxB, the effects of the physical plant or climate on teachers. I have seen preschool programs in facilities which required teachers to line up their fifteen or more three-year-olds to take them to the toilet. I have seen centers with entrances on a major heavy traffic route so that teachers had to minimize children's movement and keep them strictly within their vision at all times. Other centers are built with free and easy indoor-outdoor access always available. These differences in physical plant affect teachers and consequently program quality daily. Similarly, in some geographical regions the weather is congenial for

outdoor activity only half of the school year. In some regions teachers must spend precious time daily helping young children to put on heavy wraps, snow-suits and boots; in others teachers are never confronted with the problems of lost gloves or mittens!

These brief illustrations suggest that the quality of preschool education available to young children is dependent upon a wide range of factors, many of which are difficult to modify or change. Further, the matrix helps to emphasize there are some specific issues which emerge from the study of the current status of preschool practice which do not fall neatly into any one category of variables or one parameter. These issues represent complex interactions of many factors and forces at work in the implementation of policies as well as practices.

Some Problems of Goals

In the early 1960's, when our great expansion in preschool programs began, the United States was strongly under the influence of the view that the preschool years were the most formative ones in a child's development. It had long been the accepted view that the early years were crucial for personality development. The new emphasis of the 1960's was that the early years should be full of intellectual stimulation and furthermore, that the children of the poor were, by virtue of poverty, deprived of stimulation. We thought then that this deprivation caused these children to be unresponsive to schooling. It was almost as though the purpose of children was to make the schools "work" or become effective rather than the other way around! From this view we (in the United States) proposed to give the children of the poor the stimulation, often referred

to as "enrichment", in which they appeared to be deprived. So we inaugurated our summer enrichment programs which we hoped would give these children a "head start" on later schooling. When we look back at these early days of preschool expansion we can see that this view was naive and greatly over-simplified. Head Start programs have had many important achievements, especially on the areas of health, community mobilization and parent involvement. But the program's capacity to "prepare" children for later schooling is very much in question.

Some of the issues surrounding goals of preschool education are complex. In the eagerness to expand and to justify preschool programs, a good deal of both confusion and disagreement has developed concerning appropriate goals for preschool education. Indeed, ten years ago it was still quite common to use the term "nursery" education. Today, the term "nursery school" has dropped out of common use. We now use the term "preschool", not unlike the terms pre-cooked or pre-shrunk! The newer terminology may be related to the desire to prepare children for later schooling. This is a type of "education for after-life" - rationalization of today's pedagogy in terms of the next life!

One of the major errors in our early thinking was the view that poor children lack stimulation and that simply "enrichment" would give them a head start. It is probably only in the rare case that children of the poor are understimulated. Poor children frequently have rich environments - rich in social, cultural and linguistic experiences - as rich in meaning and complexity as the environments of other children. Indeed, many poor children - especially from urban ghettos, may be over-stimulated. However, children of the poor seem to suffer from

insufficient adult help in making sense out of their rich environments. In this sense many poor children can be said to "starve in the midst of plenty" and to appear to be understimulated.

A second view held in error was the stereotype of the "poor" child. There is no "poor" child as such. There are just as many individual differences, among children who are poor - of every ethnic group - as there are among middle-class children. Similarly, among the parents of poor children, they too represent as wide a range of individual differences as do middle-class parents. Indeed, there are very few generalizations we can make about the so-called "poor". However, our decade of experience in Head Start revealed the extensiveness of health hazards associated with poverty in America. The generality of inadequate language competences among children of the poor is as yet still the subject of rigorous debate among U.S. observers. Another fairly reliable generalization may be the existence of psychosocial "depression" or hopelessness which characterizes a large proportion of poor families, particularly in our large cities.

It is useful to recall that whenever we speak of persons or groups as being "deprived", we always do so in terms of a standard of comparison. The poor are "deprived" of goods and services (which they cannot afford) against a middle-class standard of comparison. The problem in education seems to be to what extent we accept middle-class behavior, standards and value norms as legitimate standards of comparison. This is a social-philosophical issue rather than a theoretical or methodological problem. In this perspective, I think we should be very careful not

to "teach" mothers that their children are "deprived" if they do not have preschool education. After all, preschool education is good for children when it is good preschool education! Just what activities and experiences are counted as "good" preschool education are not so easy to determine. However, the following guidelines for "good" preschool education are presented for your consideration.

The first guideline is called the "law" of optimum effects. That is to say that any environmental influence which impinges on children (perhaps adults as well) is equally detrimental in extreme amounts or frequencies or intensities. Research on a wide variety of developmental or socialization variables seems to fit into this curvilinear relationship as depicted in Figure 2.

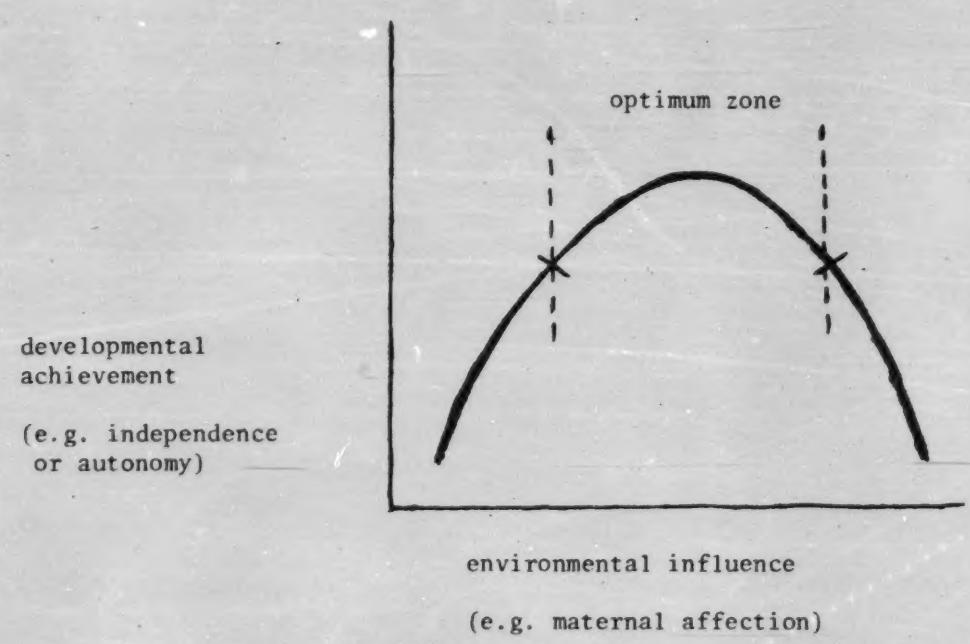

Fig. 2. Schematic Representation of the Curvilinear Relationship Between Developmental Variables and Environmental Influences Showing Optimum Zone.

For example, we all agree that children "need" affection and attention from significant others as they grow. However, children who receive too little affection suffer as much as those who have too much. Similarly there is probably an optimum amount of attention, an optimum intensity or frequency of stimulation, an optimum amount of information given at any one time and so forth. Another way of expressing this "law" (concept) is: whatever it is that is good for children, is only good in the right proportions; (or "nothing in excess", or "everything in moderation"!)

The "law" of optimum effects includes the notion of an 'optimum zone', namely the optimum amount or intensity or frequency of an environmental influence. However, the optimum zone is not a group property. We cannot assume that there is an optimum amount of affection or attention or stimulation, etc. for all four-year-olds, or all boys. The optimum is likely to be different for each individual. What is the right intensity for one may be too much or too little for the next, depending on a range of inherent attributes and antecedent learnings. In order to make the best judgment about what is the optimum zone of any given environmental influence for a given individual, one must know the individual. Here a distinction between knowing an individual, and knowing about an individual may be useful. This distinction is a difficult one to illustrate. Teachers can relate a great deal about the children in their classes. They can talk about how many siblings a child has, whether his mother works, whether he has a father, etc. But that does not mean that the teachers know the child. This kind of

knowing suggests qualities of immediacy and intimacy of the adult - child relationships; it suggests knowing or sensing something of what it feels like to be that child, knowing how that child constructs reality, understands his experiences. It suggests knowing and understanding his feelings, and knowing fairly reliably what he is attracted to and how he is likely to respond to given events or objects. Our chances of making good judgments about optimum experiences for the child increase as our knowledge of him increases.

Teachers are aided in their efforts to know children when they teach the children strategies or tactics to use to inform teachers of their ideas, thoughts or feelings. It is possible, for example, to teach children to say, "I'm lost", "You're going too fast", "Show me again", or "I'm confused" or "I don't get it". When children are equipped with such strategies, their capacities to keep teachers informed are greatly increased. One of the central tasks of teachers is to obtain the very best and clearest picture of what the world looks like and feels like and seems to be like to the child. Teachers inform themselves by observing, listening, questioning, probing, and taking note of how the child acts upon his environment and reacts to experiences.

In looking at curriculum goals, it is helpful to make a distinction between academic and intellectual goals. Academic goals are related to helping children to become pupils, helping them to learn to conform to the daily routines of classroom life, and strengthening their motivation to achieve. These goals may have a place, (particularly during middle childhood), but should not be confused with intellectual goals.

Intellectual goals include strengthening the child's tendency to be a learner (rather than pupil), an enquirer, an investigator and which helping the child to learn to study, i.e. to become absorbed, involved and interested in worthwhile phenomena. Intellectual goals are related to strengthening motivation to learn rather than to achieve.

Preschool people often confuse the term cognitive with academic. Surely all thinking is cognitive, and most human functioning has cognitive components, except perhaps reflexive actions like coughing and sneezing. When a young child believes or "feels" that his mother loves his brother more than she loves him, he is surely making a comparative judgment or a cognitive assessment of his experiences, most likely accompanied by intense affect. Those who claim to have "cognitive" curricula may be trying to imply that programs without academic exercises offer no cognitive stimulation.

A major goal for preschool education is to help children make sense of their own everyday experiences, their own environments and their own feelings. As children grow, well into their primary school years, they can be introduced to the experiences, environments and feelings of others. But in the early years, education should be designed to strengthen children's ability to describe, observe, measure, recount and record the salient aspects of their own internal as well as external environment. The conventional "academic" tools - the three R's - are acquired as tools with which to examine, explore, analyze, record, describe and organize their own experiences. If you cannot understand - at a developmentally appropriate level - the central aspects of your

own environment, then you may come to feel overwhelmed, and indeed, feel stupid. Many children under these conditions give up hope of ever understanding or making sense of their own experiences. A few years of such hopelessness may cause a child to "become" stupid.

Preschool specialists and practitioners often argue about structured versus unstructured programs. It seems to me that the common sense use of the term "structure" really means routines: pre-specified, pre-programmed sets of activities which all children in a given class are exposed to, ready or not. This common meaning of the term is misleading since it implies that programs either use such routines or offer nothing to their children. The proper meaning of the term "structure" should be planning or plans. A well-structured program is one marked by careful planning of the activities and experiences to be offered to the children. For each child there is probably an optimum amount of routine activity. Academic programs tend to subject all children in the class to the same amount and types of routines. But all programs are well served by structure, i.e. planning. In this sense, no one is advocating that preschool programs should have no structure at all.

But the really important thing about structure is where it comes from. We have at least four bases upon which to develop curricula or structure for preschool programs. The first and most obvious basis for planning (i.e. structure) is the goals of the program. A second basis for structure is our general knowledge of children in the age group we are to serve. We do not have to "rediscover the wheel". Much is known about four-year-olds or five-year-olds in general.

There is much accumulated and recorded experience which we can use (as probabilities) to guess what young children will respond to, what they might enjoy and learn from. A third basis for structure is our knowledge of each individual child in the group; our knowledge of the unique concerns, experiences, confusions, interests, pleasures and ideas of each individual in that group at any given time. Finally, the fourth basis for structure or planning is what we understand to be the course of development. Our understanding of the nature of development helps us to answer the when questions in curriculum planning. This is a difficult part of our job because there are so many competing views on the nature of development and its implications for program planning. Human development seems to be so complex that almost any theory seems to be at least partly valid!

During this last decade of rapid expansion and vigorous experimentation in preschool education in the United States, we looked to our research to help us to discover the magic way to solve complex social, political as well as educational problems. But the basic decisions in education are not research matters or even theoretical matters; they are fundamentally moral and philosophical problems for which there are no experts, but the collective commitment of a society towards its own young. Much work is yet to be done to strengthen and honor that commitment.

TEACHERS AS CONSUMERS OF EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

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It is customary throughout our culture to speak of "selling" ideas, "making a pitch" for a program, and "marketing" an innovation. We often express our agreement with the statements of others by saying "I'll buy that!" These customs reveal how commonplace the salesmanship analogy is. The purpose of this paper is to examine some implications of this salesmanship analogy when it serves as a model for the dissemination of information in education.

A basic proposition underlying the discussion presented here is that the model used for the dissemination of information in education may have important effects upon recipients of that information. The two models or styles of special interest in this discussion are referred to broadly as selling and informing. These contrasting models or styles emerged from our experiences with a small sample of the dissemination of two governments. Our characterizations of the two models or styles are impressionistic; they are abstracted from the complex cultural contexts in which each style is "at home." But our impressions were strong enough to suggest some hypotheses concerning the possible effects of these two styles on teachers, as well as their potential consequences for educational change.

Dissemination As Selling

It is a reasonable hypothesis that when we say to someone "If you do what we tell you (or use what we give you) your problems will be

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solved," that we teach the listener to expect that solutions to problems come from outside himself. In other words, the listener learns to be a consumer of solutions. A related hypothesis is that as long as one is taught in this way to be a consumer, the tendency to become a generator of one's own solutions is inhibited or weakened. It is assumed here that the two learnings--to be a consumer of solutions and to be a generator of them--are likely to be incompatible with each other.

When educational disseminators assume the role of salesmen, further consequences may be hypothesized. As a salesman, the disseminator is tempted to exaggerate the value, utility or exclusiveness of his wares, as well as their effectiveness. He is also likely to use a "straw man" against which to strengthen his own claims (our brand or kit gets better achievement scores than brand X). Furthermore, the salesman-disseminator is likely to avoid mention of contraindicators, necessary precautions or prerequisities, or potential undesirable side effects for the consumer of his product. In addition, when disseminators take on the role of salesmen, the incumbent in the reciprocal role is likely to assume the role of customer or consumer. If the sales pitch is very hard, the customer is likely either to reject the salesman, or to become the proverbial "sucker"--not without resentment.

If we now consider this dissemination style as a teaching style, we can ask, what is the client learning? As indicated above one thing he/she may be learning is that the solutions to his/her problems are "out there" rather than within. He or she may also be learning a new "need".

For example, a teacher may learn to need prepackaged materials, kits of all sorts, tape recorders, electronic gadgets, etc., in order to perceive herself as sufficiently instructive. Furthermore, as already indicated, if the consumer role is being learned or reinforced, the role of generator of ideas and materials is less likely to be strengthened. Another potential consequence of the consumer role is the mistrust which may follow the disillusionment likely to result from oversell. It seems reasonable to assume that when the frontline workers in schools, i.e. teachers, are constantly bombarded by salesmen-disseminators, they inevitably come to perceive a credibility gap between promise and performance.

However, it does not follow that institutions such as schools, when cut off from information about formal innovation, research and development will proceed to generate solutions of their own problems. Perhaps, instead, many problems go unrecognized or the status quo is accepted as satisfactory--a possibility, after all. Furthermore, re-invention of the wheel seems wasteful. Thus, it seems reasonable to acknowledge that some dissemination of information is valuable. It may be a question of style or model.

Dissemination As Informing

Our interest in another style or model came from our reading of some materials prepared for teachers in Britain. The contrasting style,

which we could characterize as the presentation of information, puts the disseminator in the role of resource person, or special consultant. An informer-disseminator does not have to exaggerate, to develop a "straw man", or to avoid contraindicators and safeguards. Even more important, the informing style of dissemination is more likely to put the reciprocal role taker in the position of client rather than customer. Furthermore, the more often the informer-disseminator shares information on contraindications and precautions, the more likely the client is to learn or to strengthen his/her tendency to be critical, skeptical and thoughtful about innovations and new ideas. While this style may not cause teachers to become generators of innovations, at least it should not discourage them from doing so. The chances are that this style, which treats clients as though they are capable of making critical judgments, of weighing risks against advantages and analyzing the validity or usefulness of materials and methods, increases the likelihood that clients will perceive themselves as sources of solutions to their problems.

Comparison of Two Publications

The impressions about styles or models of dissemination and the roles they impose on their clients emerged from the contrasting qualities of two publications: American Education (Am Ed) and Trends in Education (Trends). Both journals are official outlets for their respective governments' educational agencies. Am Ed is published ten times a year by the Office

of Education of HEW. Trends is published quarterly by the Department of Education and Science of the British government. Although each of the two publications carries a disclaimer indicating that the views expressed by authors do not necessarily reflect their respective agency's views, it is reasonable to assume that each publication has a mission to change school practices for the better. For the purposes of this discussion let us look at the 1971 volume of each publication.

Format Differences

The two publications are strikingly different in appearance and format. Am Ed is a large (9" x 12") attractive and colorful, glossy paper magazine with a variety of page layout styles. The covers display designs, stylized portraits, photographs, cartoon-type characters and announcements in large bold type. In the 36 pages of the first issue of Am Ed of 1971, there are 40 illustrations including photos and sketches. Trends (6" x 9½") is more like a journal, than a magazine; its cover design remains the same--except for color changes. Only author photographs are used.

It is not known whether the British publication format and layout are a function of taste and/or preference, financial constraints, or a combination of these factors. Whatever the cause, Trends gives an impression of seriousness and deliberation, of reading matter to be tackled. The American magazine's appearance gives an impression of zeal and excitement.

Am Ed lists no advisory board; the editorial advisory board of Trends consists of the senior officers of the Department of Education and Science and senior members of the Inspectorate.

Regular Features

Each issue of Am Ed includes a message from the editor outlining the issue's articles, as well as recent pronouncements by the Commissioner of Education. Other regular features include a page called "Items" written in bulletin-announcement style. The feature called "Federal Funds" informs readers about specific fund disbursements. "Statistics of the Month" reports on such data as numbers enrolled in colleges, numbers of foreign students, numbers of doctor's degrees awarded, etc. A section called "Recent Publications" announces the availability of pamphlets and other documents issued by a wide variety of government agencies. The back cover of each issue features a research and development report accompanied by a relevant photograph and information about how to obtain the full text from which the report was extracted.

Each issue of Trends features a section called "Talking Points" whose author is identified only as the "Question Master," presumably a senior editor of the journal. "Talking Points" means points of departure for discussion. In "Talking Points" the Question Master gives news of government plans and actions, news of White Papers and some introductory remarks about the articles in the issue of forthcoming issues. The only other regular feature in Trends is a section called "Books." In this section a brief review of three to six recently published books is presented. The review usually includes a statement indicating who is most likely to find the book helpful. A section called "Readers Write" appeared in only one issue of the 1971 volume of Trends.

Characteristics of Contributing Authors

Differences among the authors contributing to the two publications

are interesting, but difficult to interpret. For Am Ed, 64% (N=51) of the authors are professional writers (e.g. newspaper reporters, free lance journalists). Only one of the contributors to Trends is identified primarily as a "writer, author and broadcaster with wide experience of education, youth work and counseling...and has written books on moral problems". This author, James Hemming, contributed the article "The Road to Social Maturity" (Trends in Education, No. 22, April, 1971). The largest category of Trends' authors (N=31) consists of members of the Inspectorate (42%); the second largest, of authors having university or college positions (29%).

Styles of Titles

Many titles used for articles in Am Ed have a Madison Avenue flavor. For example:

St. Louis' Educational Supermarket
Dovack's Machines Help Children Read
Hyperactive Engineering
Presidential Scholars--Spectacular Achievers
A Record-Smashing Year for American Education
The Cinderella Network

The titles in Trends are more indicative of the topic covered, seem rather dull and lack the exclamation mark quality of the American counterpart:

The School Leaving Age
The Teachers' Centre Concept
Poetry on Its Own Feet
The Changing Role of the Primary Head

Editorial Messages

American Education. In the December 1971 issue of Am Ed an editorial titled "An Emphasis on Usefulness" gives the purposes of the

publication:

> The magazine is addressed primarily to people directly concerned with conducting or shaping education..seeks to illuminate two particular aspects of the educational enterprise. The first of these is the diverse, complex and we suspect often confusing operation of the U.S. Office of Education itself...The second area we especially concentrate on is that of successful educational practice. (Inside cover, 7, (10), 1971)

Other views of the "enterprise" are revealed in the editorials:

> Perhaps we can even assist educators to engineer the local-state-Federal partnership to a higher peak of efficiency...(Inside cover, 7 (2), 1971)

And a quote from the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland:

> The schools are engaged in swift change because educators have chosen to change them. The schools are in good hands. (Inside cover, 7, (2), 1971)

Considering the very strong pressure for change and innovation in the publication itself, the quote seems to undermine someone's credibility.

Another editorial gives an example of "straw man" exclusive product salesmanship:

> While much that has been introduced into education by previous Commissioners have proved sound and will undoubtedly be continued, new programs and new emphases to bring education to the front lines in helping American society back to full health and vitality will bear the exclusive imprint of Commissioner Marland and his team. (Inside cover, 7, (3),1971)

Five issues later, the editor points out that "In terms of performance and public support, education clearly is alive and very well indeed in the United States" (Inside cover, 7, (8), 1971).

The June 1971 editorial gives an exaggerated view of the effectiveness of "Sesame Street" mainly by confusing popular success with effectiveness. Note that:

> ...commercial television...is now copying material from Sesame Street for its commercials. That's progress. And yet, the (Children's Television) Workshop does not weep...that there are no worlds to conquer. (Inside cover, 7, (5), 1971).

Is there some confusion between buying and learning in young children? "Sesame Street" comes up again in the November issue:

> USOE has by now invested almost $6 million in Sesame Street...Currently...'Sesame Street' is being seen by more than eight million preschool youngsters, representing an average annual USOE investment of 40 cents a child...that's a pretty fair bargain.

These selections from the editorials of Am Ed give something of the style and flavor of the magazine. We see terms like "educational enterprise," "engineering" and "efficiency," "investments" and "bargains." This publication could very easily be taken for a magazine from the sales office of a large manufacturing concern.

Trends. The closest parallel to the editorial column in Trends is the feature called "Talking Points". In the July 1971 issue we get some sense of the editors' approach to change, innovation and dissemination under the subheading "Why Innovate?" (No. 23, p. 2). The Question Master poses the question "What makes people welcome change and makes them resist it?" In formulating an answer, he turns to ideas expressed by a medievalist at a conference on change. He puts the problems into historical perspective, referring to the agricultural revolution of

the eighteenth century and the fact that there was a thousand year lag between the invention of water power driven machines for milling and its ultimate adoption, and that it was a thousand years before the decimal system known in India was adopted by Europeans. He points out that:

> Twentieth century teachers...will welcome innovation not as innovation but because it is just what they have been looking for (No. 23, p. 3)*

The Question Master goes on to ask "So what are teachers looking for?" and follows with a brief discussion of problems teachers worry about such as the widening range of abilities of secondary school pupils, the greater range of knowledge from which to choose a curriculum, and the increasingly greater "worldiness" of the young. It is suggested that a curriculum performs only an advisory function. Some precautions concerning innovation and change are mentioned, e.g., "change cannot proceed more quickly than the capacity of the schools to absorb it." Some obstacles to change are suggested: "finance, staff attitudes, the mobility of pupils, parental pressures and examinations," and it is pointed out that "innovating project directors may create more problems than they solve" (p. 3).

A recent article in another journal is cited to point out that a teacher's task is to find "ways of giving children access to their own powers." The sense of the article itself seems to respect the importance

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*Permission granted. Trends in Education. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Great Britain.

of giving teachers access to their own critical powers as well.

As might be expected, the two editorial styles are representative of the respective publications. Trends articles frequently include the history of a problem and some discussion of historical leaders related to a given topic. The Am Ed magazine rarely refers to the history of a problem or topic.

Contrasting Treatments of the Same Topic

Both Am Ed and Trends alerted the attention of their readers to the basically British innovation known as Teacher Centers. The title of the Am Ed article in the December 1971 issue is "A Santa's Workshop for Teachers" (7, (10) pp. 3-8). The article was written by former teacher and freelance writer Arlene Silberman. It is accompanied by attractive and illustrative photographs. The article describes the activities and the atmosphere of the teacher center at the Durham Elementary School in Philadelphia. While the article includes numerous helpful suggestions and ideas for a potential adopter, it also provides some examples of super-salesmanship, oversell, exaggeration and omission of precautions.*

The article begins by pointing out that the teachers "flocked in droves" to the Center (p. 3) and that the Center's leaders repeatedly had to face the problem of how to "persuade teachers to leave" the Center at the end of the day. Of course, this may well have been the case at the Durham Center. The leaders, Donald and Lore Rassmussen are widely

*American Education, under the government imprimatur, writes "No permission necessary to reproduce contents except copyrighted photos or other materials." This article is one of only three of the 51 articles in the 1971 volume which carries a copyright. Readers of this paper are advised to see the article as it appears for further details.

known as talented and creative teachers. But it seems unfair to lead would-be adopters of the teacher center concept to expect the same. Some indication of all of the groundwork involved in reaching this level of success could serve to modify readers' expectations of quick and easy success with teacher centers.

Later the article points out that teachers get "hooked" on coming to the Center. Is it an addiction? Will it wear off and lead to withdrawal, disappointment, or disillusionment? The author points out that although Philadelphia teachers have contracts which provide that they be paid $6.65 an hour for work assigned to them after school hours, the teachers "throng" to the Teacher Center without receiving any additional pay or even carfare. (see p. 4).

In the passages cited above, the words "flocked", "hooked" and "thronged" seem to lead readers either to expect quick success in adopting or "buying" the innovation, or to doubt the credibility of the report. The article makes frequent claims of spectacular success and spectacular results. The author points out that the signs of success were everywhere, and that even though a plush new school was available to parents in the area, the overwhelming majority of parents chose to keep their children in the much older Durham school. She added that one parent whose son attended one of Philadelphia's most fashionable private schools was trying to enroll him at Durham. By this time, a reader who is a teacher or parent might begin to feel relatively deprived of not having access to a Center as spectacularly successful as the one described in the article.

There are several more examples of this kind of oversell in the article. Only once is any hint given of possible difficulty: a reference to "times when money was scarce" and the Center's leaders had to scrounge for materials. One of the leaders is quoted as saying that "Any school can do it" as he recounts his own ingenious methods of finding materials. In no other sense does one get a suggestion about false starts, set-backs or prerequisite conditions for success. The captions under the attractive photographs also give the story a sales pitch quality: "Durham magnetizes teachers" (p. 4), "A triwall easel is a grabber" (p. 5). "A photograph of a small homemade loom?" A photograph of an adult, presumably a teacher, at the woodworking bench: "No pencil-and-paper classroom for her" acknowledges and perhaps reinforces an adult's reluctance to use two of the three R's.

In the July 1971 issue of Trends, two companion articles on teachers' centres are presented under the overall title "The Teachers' Centre Concept." In the first place it is interesting to note that the American story uses the term "Teacher Center" throughout; the British story uses the term "Teachers' Centre" throughout. In Trends the editor's introductory note points out that a teachers' centre is a "striking" concept. One of the two articles describes a centre in London; the other describes a centre in Maryland U.S.A.:

> There would seem to be agreement on both sides of the Atlantic on the significance of the centre idea and certainly some of the problems outlined in our report on the American developments have been encountered by those working here...(p. 42).

Thus the editor's introduction alerts the readers to some potential problems with this innovation. The first article "A Centre in Britain" by R. Arnold (No. 23, pp. 42-44) gives an encouraging description of one center, pointing out that a working party of teachers and others "generated an unexpectedly large number of possiblities" and that a meeting was attended by "very nearly a fifth of the teaching force of the borough." These statements give quite a different flavor from terms like "flocked", "hooked", or "thronged". Farther along, the writer reports that:

> Another activity that has been particularly successful has been a programme of children's theatre visits...

By interjecting the word "particularly" into the phrase, an impression is given that not all projects were equally successful--an assertion which is credible. Finally the author points out that the center described "would not yet claim to be fully developed."

The companion article "A Centre in Maryland, U.S.A." by L. Boucher, takes up a series of problems involved in the implementation of the Teachers' Center concept. These include changes in role relationships of school personnel, degree of influence and responsibility to be accepted by the organizations involved, and the practicality of extending the teachers' center concept; the author argues that the "difficulties...should not detract from the idea behind the...concept" (p. 47).

In January of 1972, Trends published an article entitled "Teachers Centres--A Primary View" written by Colin Richards, a Deputy Headmaster.

The editorial introduction reads: "From the point of view of the primary teacher some teachers' centres as they are now developing leave something to be desired." The author develops several precautions, one of which is that:

> Many interested teachers have been misled into thinking that local curriculum development work was comparatively easy and able to provide plentiful results in the short-term (p. 32, No. 25)

The October 1972 issue of Trends devotes another article to Teachers' Centers. The author, J. G. Owen, a Deputy Chief Education Officer, devotes the major content of his article to a discussion of the prerequisite "conditions of success" for teachers' centres. The article is based largely on feedback data Owen collected from centre participants. Among the major conditions mentioned are ties with a national project, the importance of teacher consensus, and the continuity of effort. While the American article mentions the "joy" and "playfulness" in the atmosphere of the teacher center, Owen points out that the development of continuity in their work "is arduous but interesting for teachers..." (p. 4) He adds that:

> Teachers' centres have to pass through a process of development which cannot be artificially shortened (p. 6)

> ...local teacher-based reform of the curriculum may have a very far reaching and significant effect...But the invention is barely seven years old. At present it is enough to say that it seems to be the beginning of a strategy which will succeed (p. 7)

These excerpts illustrate the way information can be disseminated to help the client--a would-be adopter--consider the risks and potentials of the

innovation. They include acknowledgment of the preconditions thought to be necessary to success, the time required for development, and some historical perspective. No promise of quick success is made. The Trends style seems to be more likely to place the reader into a thoughtful posture than does its American counterpart. Perhaps the style is in keeping with the proverbial habit of understatement often attributed to the British.

Conclusion

The two publications compared above should now be seen in the contexts in which they are distributed. The American publication is one of hundreds of professional and commercial publications which all compete for the attention of a wide variety of readers. If it were as ponderous as its British counterpart it would very likely be overlooked. In general the articles are easily read, and their major points clearly stated. The range of topics covered is wide, but the writers seem to succeed in presenting their information so that the diverse readerships' interest in them can be obtained.

American readers of the educational press are accustomed to attractive and colorful materials. The expectation of pictorial eye-catching literature cannot be ignored by American editors. It may be that disseminators are caught in a circle: reader habits and expectations are reinforced and strengthened by disseminators who must take the expectations into account in production. Changes in the

appearance, format and style of writing would not seem to be wise. But reduction in the exaggeration of claims, and an increase in precautionary statements both might be in order. This is to suggest an increase in client-centeredness rather than business-protectiveness. A client-centered approach may serve to restore trust in and credibility of the educational research and development community. It may also strengthen the resourcefulness of their clients.

It may be that the style of educational dissemination exemplified by American Education tells us something about the people to whom disseminators report. If the appropriators of funds for educational innovation, research and development require evidence of product adoption for refunding, then the disseminator who outlines precautions and safeguards will suffer. To the extent that such a funding policy exists, professional educators and disseminators may need to explain its risks and disadvantages. The context in which the British publication is "at home" is one which lacks funds for the scope and magnitude of educational research and development enjoyed by Americans. Thus the field in which Trends competes may be very small. Furthermore, in terms of absolute numbers of educators and varieties of their backgrounds and needs the British disseminator's assignment is likely to be a less complex one. However, it may be that British readers would welcome more attractive materials and less labored texts.

No doubt the sheer size and complexity of the American educational community, and its traditional commitment to educational service to all its people plays a part in the American style. But modifications should be explored and examined.

NOTES ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EXCITEMENT

Lilian G. Katz, Ph.D.

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NOTES ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EXCITEMENT

Lilian G. Katz

Recently when I visited an early childhood program, a sign on the classroom bulletin board caught my attention. The sign listed instructional pointers for the teaching staff. One item on the list was: "Keep it fun. Make it exciting for both you and the children!" This injunction to keep children excited, or to "make learning exciting" seems to represent a common confusion between what is educative and what is exciting. To some extent this confusion applies to strategies of innovation and change in education as well.

What is Excitement?

For the purpose of this discussion, let us assume that each individual has an average, characteristic, or typical (for him) level of activity or responsiveness. Some specialists refer to this responsiveness as level of activation (see Nowlis, 1970), or as arousal (Ellis, 1969), and some refer to it as the "rate of stimulation or neural firing" (Tomkins, 1970). For this discussion we are referring to the typical day-to-day responsiveness, activity and involvement which may characterize an individual when he is neither excited nor depressed. In Figure 1, this normal level of activity for any given individual is represented by line A. Now let us introduce into the environment of this hypothetical individual an event which he experiences as exciting (indicated at point B in Figure 1). At this point the individual's level of

of responsiveness goes up, and when it has reached point C, we say that he is excited. In current terminology we say that he is "turned on." Now let us consider some of the implications of "turning on" children and adults.

Implications of Excitement for Children

By definition, excitement is an extraordinary level of responsiveness, activity or arousal. Therefore, it cannot be maintained without becoming in turn the new ordinary level. It seems reasonable to assume that the high level of responsiveness must "come down." How long the excitement period lasts, or how quickly the individual returns to his own normal level of responsiveness probably varies widely among and within individuals as well as situations.

My hunch is that an individual--whether child or adult--may not just simply come down to his own normal state, but that he may fall below his own normal level of responsiveness. Although it is difficult to know for sure, I am hypothesizing that in this period (indicated by point D on Figure 1), some children may become depressed, and some may withdraw from interaction completely. Other children may appear to "fall apart" and others to be satiated. On such occasions we are likely to define a child's irritability or behavior disorganization as overtiredness.

It may be that when given sufficient rest from an exciting environment a child spontaneously recovers his own normal level of responsiveness. But another possibility is that adult-induced excitement teaches children to expect and/or depend upon repeated "doses" of it administered to them in their classrooms. Point E in Figure 1 indicated the administration

of another "dose"--perhaps necessarily a stronger dose than at point B. In this sense, teachers' belief that their pupils should be excited or "turned on" leads to an addiction pattern: when the first effect wears off, another, possibly stronger, dose must be introduced. Such an addiction pattern could lock both teachers and their pupils into exhausting patterns of activities and relationships. A more important consequence of this pattern is that it may rob children of the opportunity to develop and strengthen their own capacities for generating interesting, productive or stimulating activities on their own. In other words, they may acquire a need to be entertained or "turned on" by others.

Implications of Excitement for Teachers

It seems to me that if teachers believe that they must keep their pupils excited, they must develop sets of activities which are not much more than cheap gimmicks of superficial or fleeting interest and value. In so many classrooms one sees the products of one-shot, one-time activities displayed on shelves and bulletin boards. These activities may have been fun and exciting for their brief duration. But I am suggesting that a major index of good quality, i.e.that which is educative, in a program (for young children) is work and/or play which invites or requires the children's sustained interest and involvement. Educative activities for young children are those which require some planning, problem-solving or construction (at developmentally appropriate levels) which can be sources of satisfaction and pleasure rather than excitement and fun.

Certainly some educative activities are fun and exciting as well.

Sesame Street is an example of an entertainment program which may be instructive as well as exciting for young children. Many of the standard activities of nursery schools are also fun: finger-painting, lotto games, climbing on outdoor equipment, rhythm and dancing activities. But these are all activities of relatively momentary quality. The kind of sustained involvement and interest which seem to be educative can be illustrated in these activities seen in a crowded nursery school for three to five-year-old children:

> A small group of children who had started playing one day with doctors' and nurses' dress-up outfits decided to add a hospital bed, several doctors' instruments and (doll) patients. Then they made (sewed) a burlap stretcher and constructed and painted an ambulance large enough for two children to sit in the driver's cabin (complete with an old steering wheel), and for one or two children to attend the patients in the back. This activity had developed over a period of a few weeks.
>
> On the same morning I saw a complex activity centered around a cement truck the children had constructed from old lumber. The truck was large enough for four children to ride in, climb in and out of, and deliver sacks of cement to other children who were building a structure (also large enough to enter). This building was constructed with bricks the children made from pairs of egg cartons glued together so that their flat sides were exposed.
>
> A group of children worked for several days on sewing stuffed dolls. Some were painting portraits of the dolls they had made. Two children were constructing replicas of their respective cats and dogs from cartons larger than themselves. The cat was painted orange and white; the head moved from side to side (and displayed ample whiskers); and the young artist proudly informed the observer that she had also made the cat food resting at his feet. Several children were adding details to the row houses they had constructed from small cartons. Their houses reflected the typical construction of their own neighborhoods; some included windows, doors, chimneys and furniture. Some children had added trays of dirt as front gardens and in these gardens were (paper) trees and one swing set made from popsicle sticks.

Many other activities, which involved planning, problem solving, and construction and invited children's sustained involvement, were also seen

during that one morning. These children did not seem to be excited or turned-on. They did seem to be deeply involved and interested in reconstructing salient aspects of their own experiences and environments. In their analysis of the Open Education approach used by the Education Development Center (EDC, Newton, Massachusetts) advisors, Bussis and Chittenden (1970) pointed out that:

> EDC advisors are less impressed with the teacher who understands and can capture interest for periods of time than they are with the teacher who brings out in children the sort of interests that underlie sustained involvement in learning. In a good classroom the observer would undoubtedly see both the 'captured' and the sustaining interests, but the emphasis would be on the latter (pp.16-17).

It is tempting here to suggest that the emphasis on selecting activities should be on making them interesting rather than exciting. But the term "interest" is as fraught with semantic pitfalls as are the terms "excitement" and "education" (see Peters, 1967, pp. 91-102). Getzels defined an interest as "a characteristic disposition, organized through experience, which impels an individual to seek out particular objects, activities, skills, understandings, or goals for attention and acquisition" (1969, p.470). Activities which foster and strengthen this disposition seem to me to be educative; activities which strengthen children's dependence on adult-induced excitement seem to undermine or inhibit the development of this disposition. It may be that teacher-imposed or television-induced excitement, or the ubiquitous one-shot, short term activities offered young children, encourages the disposition to be a consumer or spectator, at best; thrill-seeker or psychological drop out, at worst.

Another way of looking at the problem is that while excitement may

originally have been thought of as a means by which to launch children into educative activities, it has inadvertently become an end in itself. Another point is that learning of significant skills, ideas and concepts takes time. Trivial skills and facts can be learned quickly. Perhaps length of time required for learning is related to resistance to extinction of the same. Excitement and the "learnings" associated with it may be rapid in both acquisition and extinction.

In discussions with teachers concerning the distinction between what is educative and what is exciting, it is often assumed that I recommend giving children practice in boredom! Far from it! All children inevitably get some practice at coping with boredom; to provide such practice as a matter of policy would be sadistic. In this connection it may be useful to point out that there are two variables involved in this discussion. One variable is level of responsiveness defined by excitement at one extreme and depression at the other. Another variable may be called interest with involvement or absorption at one extreme and boredom or apathy at the other. It is difficult to persuade teachers that we are not really caught between the extremes of excitement and depression. Sustained interest, involvement or absorption--with occasional fluctuations in terms of satisfaction and pleasure--are qualitatively different from excitement and depression. A useful analogy (for this observer) may be made by drawing a distinction between the music of Tschaikowsky and Bach. The former is delightful and moving from time to time. The "Nutcracker Suite," once or twice a year, is enjoyable. More often than that it might lose its charm and ability to move us. But good Bach may

be heard frequently; on each occasion pleasure is enhanced, fresh nuances and meanings may be enjoyed. The quality of constrained passion is among its many assets.

Implications of the Excitement Problem for Educational Changes

Like many other problems in education, the educative/excitement confusion reflects a pervasive problem in the wider culture and society. We seem to live in an excitement and cheap-thrill oriented culture. Note how often you hear the "exciting" descriptor in advertising pitches and in ordinary daily conversations. To a large extent, strategies for educational change, reform, and innovation are also aimed at getting decision makers as well as practitioners excited about new ideas, programs, technologies, and materials. Much pressure is exerted on teachers to adopt new, exciting practices and procedures. My hunch is that this hard selling (typically overselling) is followed (at point D in Figure 1) by both disillusionment and mistrust among oversold adopters. It sometimes seems that in order to overcome the disillusionment and mistrust from previous disappointments, the change agents make bigger and bigger promises and omit more and more precautions and contraindicators. If educational practitioners are treated as consumers (perhaps as the proverbial suckers), they may learn to expect to be sold solutions and gimmicks-bags of tricks! Such an expectation may block teachers' alternative learnings (e.g. to be resourceful, thoughtful, patient, persistent in the face of education problems, etc.). The two dispositions, to be consumers of solutions and to be originators of solutions may be examples of the incompatible

responses we read about in contemporary learning studies in educational psychology journals.

Too many articles in recent publications give educational reform and innovation a kind of soap opera quality (see Katz and Krasnow, in this collection). My hunch is that the spectacular success stories offered in educational dissemination materials are often misleading. They remind me of the television series in which doctors and lawyers are portrayed as living from one peak experience (open hearts to breaking hearts) after another! Yet, the health of a real community is actually maintained by the physician who administers vaccinations, booster shots, and looks at sore throats--perhaps a hundred a week. Surely that is not exciting. Perhaps a relevant factor to consider here is that such routine procedures as looking at sore throats must be performed alertly on each occasion in order not to miss potentially significant signs of serious pathology.

The ability to perform routine procedures alertly suggest that a part of the distinction I am trying to make between what is educative and what is exciting concerns the pattern of mobilization of energy. Excitement connotes high bursts of energy release with rapid depletion. A steady energy output over longer periods of time seems to be called for in any task or study involving complex ideas, concepts or lines of inquiry. The opportunity to cultivate the ability to manage energy in this steady way probably should be provided early in childhood.

Summary

I have suggested that educators of young children are often both the perpetrators and the victims of a culture-wide confusion between what is

educative and what is exciting. It seems to me that teachers who feel pressured to keep children excited have to fail in the long run. I believe that when we bombard children with too many exciting activities and television programs (plus elaborate and gimmicky toys) we teach them to expect, if not to need, to be excited. At the same time, however, we cheat them of the opportunity to learn to gain satisfaction from sustained involvement and effort. The real challenge to teachers, as I see it, is to develop activities that children will find satisfying over a long period of time rather than momentarily exciting--the kinds of activities that invite genuine and appropriate problem solving, mastery of the difficult, and concentration or absorption, and that even may be a little routine.

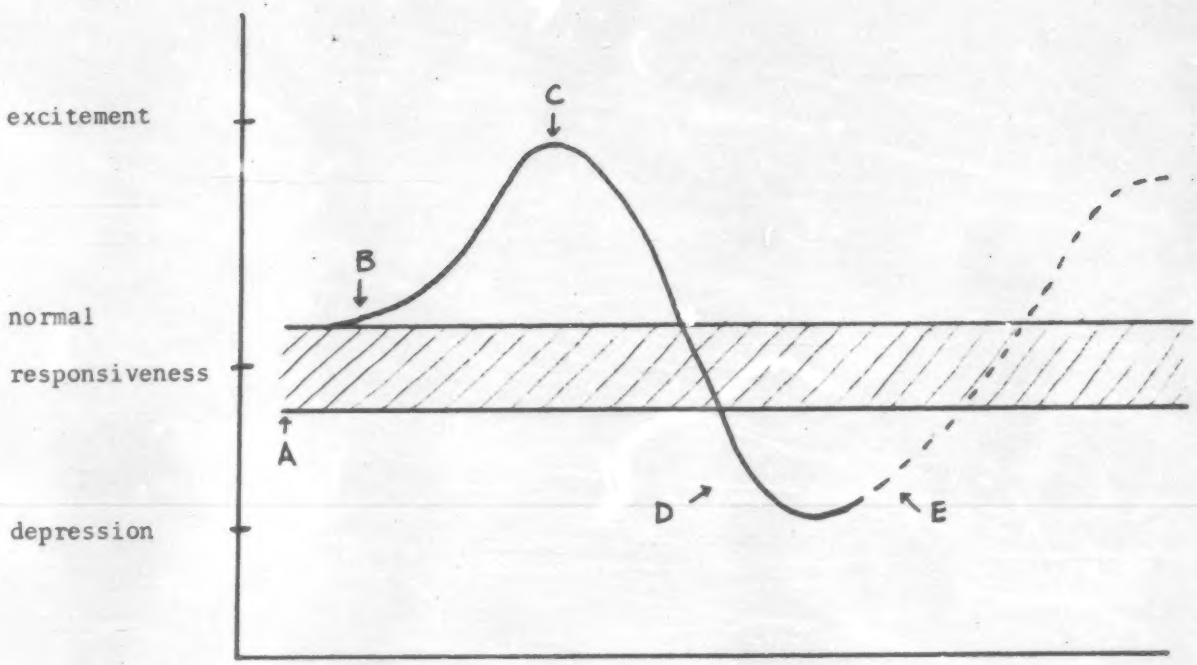

Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Changes in Responsiveness

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Postscript

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